

From: John Lazzaro
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 8:54pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello,

This is a public comment for the Microsoft Settlement. I believe the settlement is deficient, because it doesn't address the key impediment to competition in the Office Suite market today -- the inability of competing programs to reliably read and write data files of the Office programs (.doc, .ppt, etc), because of a lack of complete, accurate documentation of these formats by Microsoft for third parties to use.

I would suggest the publication of all software sources for all present and future versions of Microsoft Office and related programs, as the simplest and most reliable way to aid interoperability by competitive products, as well as a non-discriminatory, royalty-free licensing of all patents related to the reading and writing of these file formats, and to any on-the-wire network protocols that transmit these formats. Anything less than source code is insufficient, because it is in Microsoft's best interest to make any documents describing the formats be incomplete, inaccurate, and out-of-sync with currently shipping software.

Note this publication in no way affects the Copyright on Microsoft Office -- it merely lets competitors have a level playing field, by showing exactly how to read and write these file format types.

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